



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

SEVP
STUDENT AND EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM

SEVP Webinar Series: InFocus
Nov. 10, 2015, 1 p.m. EST

Webinar Presenters



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Presentation Overview

- Today's presentation is on the right-hand side of your screen
- Check out our Hyperlink Appendix
 - [Links to all Web pages mentioned during this presentation](#)
- Need to leave early? A recording of today's presentation will be available through the Study in the States Stakeholder Webinars page
 - StudyintheStates.dhs.gov/Stakeholder-Webinars

Regulatory Fast Facts

STEM OPT

- Open for public comment until Nov. 18, 2015
 - [How to submit comments](#)
- Rule overview
 - Allows F-1 science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) optional practical training (OPT) students to extend OPT period by 24 months
 - Improves oversight of STEM OPT extensions
 - Mentoring and training plans help document learning goals and objectives for practical training
 - Wage and other protections for STEM OPT students and U.S. workers
 - Extensions only for students with degrees from accredited schools

Policy Guidance Review

Student Employment

- Draft guidance documents available for comment on Study in the States in September 2015:
 - F-1 off-campus employment
 - F-1 emergent circumstances
 - F-1 on-campus employment
 - F-1 internship with an international organization
 - F-1 and M-1 general employment

Upcoming Draft Policy Guidance

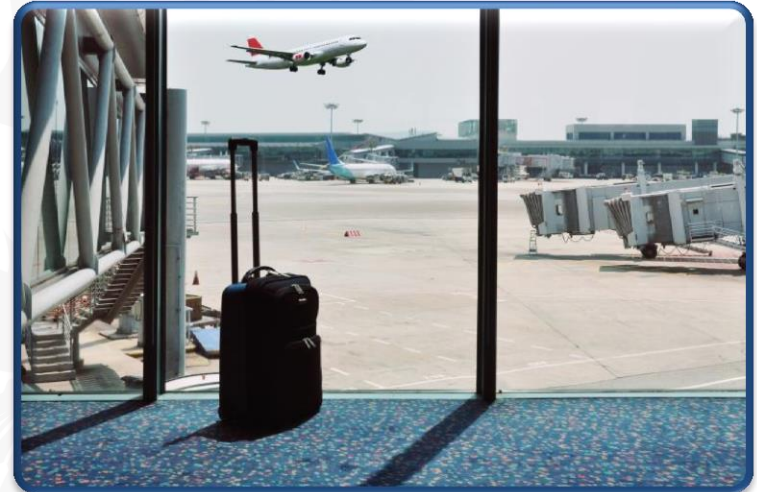
Student Employment and Pathway Programs

- Student employment – practical training:
 - F-1 OPT
 - F-1 curricular practical training
 - M-1 practical training
 - F-1 and M-1 record keeping and reporting
 - H-1B cap-gap
- Pathway Programs
 - Follow-up on the 2014 draft guidance series

Upcoming Interim Final Policy Guidance

F-1 Student Absence

- Explains how F-1 students leaving the United States during a school session can apply for a temporary absence and the readmission process



Upcoming Interim Final Policy Guidance

Annual Vacation, Student Absence and School Breaks

- F-1 Annual Vacation and School Breaks
 - Definition of an annual vacation
 - When and under what circumstances an F-1 student may take an annual vacation
 - How school breaks differ from vacation
- M-1 Student Absence and School Breaks
 - How M-1 students leaving the country during a school session can apply for a temporary absence
 - Process for readmission

Upcoming Interim Final Policy Guidance

Definition of the Academic Year

- Supersedes previously-issued interim final guidance
- Provides additional clarification on the definition of an academic year as it applies to various types of school sessions



Upcoming Interim Final Policy Guidance

Border Commuter Address Requirements

- Clarifies address regulations for F-1 and M-1 border commuter students
- Discusses how these requirements differ from those of other F-1 and M-1 students



Upcoming Interim Final Policy Guidance

F-1 Five Month Guidance and DSO Staffing

- F-1 Five Month Guidance
 - Considers the allowable time between school transfers and student reinstatement
 - How school breaks and annual vacation affect M-1 reduce course load and temporary absence
- Designated School Official (DSO) Staffing of Instructional Sites
 - Responds to “Adjustments to Limitations on Designated School Official Assignment and Part-time Study by F-2 and M-2 Nonimmigrants” regulatory change
 - Addresses minimum staffing requirements for SEVP-certified schools

Upcoming Interim Final Policy Guidance

Engaged in Instruction and Change of Ownership

- Engaged in Instruction
 - Examines the limited circumstances for certification of a program of study without prior student enrollment
- Change of Ownership
 - Clarifies when SEVP considers a change of ownership to have occurred at a school



Policy and Regulatory Updates

Hot Topics and Trends

- Draft guidance
 - Not agency policy
 - Does not have the enforcement authority of federal governing regulations
 - Does not establish standards or requirements for adjudicators
- Interim final guidance
 - Official SEVP policy used by adjudicators
 - Remains open for public comment
 - Schools are expected to comply with interim final guidance
- Register to receive alerts when SEVP posts new draft guidance

Regulatory Fast Facts

DSO Staffing and F-2/M-2 Part-time Study

- Additional DSOs
 - Updated Form I-17, “Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student”
 - Ability to enter more than 10 DSOs into the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)
- F-2/M-2 part-time study
 - DSOs are not responsible for overseeing or tracking dependent study
 - Record keeping and reporting responsibilities for DSOs remain the same for F and M students and their dependents
- Questions?
 - FAQ available on [ICE.gov/SEVIS/Schools](https://ice.dhs.gov/SEVIS/Schools)

Release Update

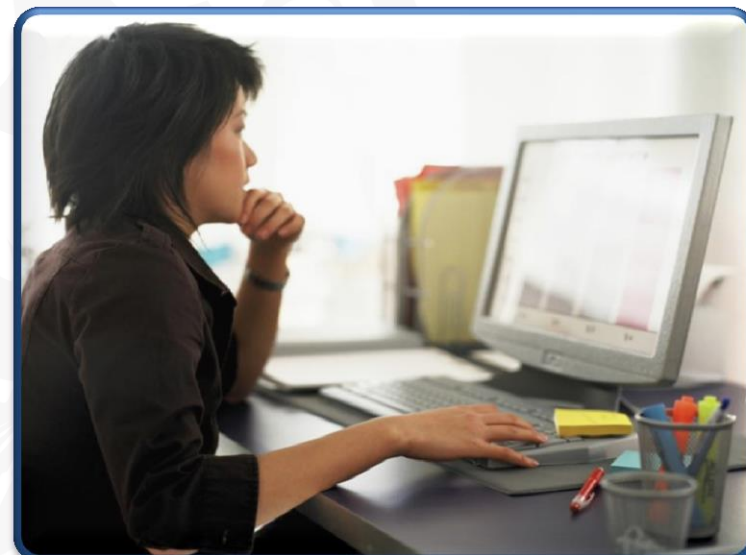
SEVIS Release 6.21

- Updated Form I-20, “Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status”
 - Conversion deadline: July 1, 2016
- Name, address and email standards
 - Address validation updates
 - Address Doctor information for SEVIS users
- SEVIS downloads page and mass reprint feature
 - Download reports identifying records changed as a result of the name, address or email standardization
 - Request for mass reprint

Planning Ahead

PDSO/DSO Annual Verification Project

- Verification period begins Dec. 2, 2015
- The principal designated school official (PDSO) must verify SEVIS users before March 2, 2016
 - Failure to complete verification prior to the deadline will result in loss of SEVIS access and batch capability for all DSOs at the school



Planning Ahead

Upcoming Enhancements

- SEVIS Release 6.23 – December 2015
 - Additional inputs for OPT employer information
 - Automatic termination of student records for unemployment
 - Student email addresses and telephone numbers
- Planned enhancements for 2016
 - Improved ability to search for schools
 - Improved work flow and help for Form I-17 updates
 - Enhanced work flow for creating the Form I-20
 - Improved correction request processes
 - Functionality to register multiple students at one time and upload evidence through SEVIS

SEVIS Help Hub

StudyintheStates.dhs.gov/SEVIS-Help-Hub

- Source for all SEVIS information
 - SEVIS Webinar Series
 - Fact sheets, FAQ guides and job aids
- Content updated regularly and will grow over time
- Provide feedback through the “Was this Helpful” feature



What's New in School Certification *Processing Updates*

- Form I-17 updates
 - Currently processing updates from the March/April 2015 time period
 - Average time frame for adjudication is at least 60 days
 - May take longer depending on a school's specific circumstances
- Recertification
 - Average time frame for adjudication is at least six months
 - May take longer depending on a school's specific circumstances

School Certification Best Practices

Keep your Form I-17 Up-to-Date

- Updates made to the Form I-17 within 21 days of a change will help assist with accurate and timely processing
 - Remember, federal governing regulations prescribe deadlines for DSOs to submit Form I-17 updates
- Remember, an update to the Form I-17 is not the same as recertification
 - Updates do not extend a school's certification expiration date (CED)



School Certification Best Practices

Keep Important Dates in Mind

- Remember important dates, such as:
 - **Your school's CED**
 - DSOs will receive a notice through SEVIS 180 days before their CED
 - Review your Form I-17 upon notification to ensure it is accurate and up-to-date
 - **Upcoming events in your office**
 - Remember any upcoming staffing changes that could affect the school's ability to file for recertification
- Plan accordingly to prevent your school from being withdrawn on its CED



School Certification Best Practices

Check Your Email Address in SEVIS

- Check that the PDSO email address in SEVIS is accurate and up-to-date
 - Allows the school to continue to receive notifications and requests for evidence from SEVP



School Certification Best Practices

Know Who to Contact

- If you have questions about Form I-17 updates or recertification, contact:
 - The SEVP Response Center (SRC)
 - Your local field representative



Compliance and the Community

Employment Authorization for Certain Nepalese Students

- Suspension of certain regulatory requirements for F-1 nonimmigrant Nepalese students as a result of the April 2015 earthquake
 - Students must have been present in the United States on June 24, 2015 and enrolled in an SEVP-certified school
- Enables students to:
 - Obtain employment authorization
 - Work an increased number of hours during the school term
 - Reduce their course load
- Remains in effect through Dec. 24, 2016

Compliance and the Community

I-901 SEVIS Fee Payment

- Form updates: mandatory email address field
 - Allows SEVP to send students an instant email notification when their I-901 SEVIS Fee payment status changes
- Notice of unpaid I-901 SEVIS Fee
 - SEVP mailed a second round of notices to Active F and M students who do not have a valid I-901 SEVIS Fee payment on their SEVIS record
 - Students have 30 days to make a payment before SEVP terminates their SEVIS record
 - DSOs will receive an email notification with the names of students who have not paid

Compliance and the Community

Student Scams

- Increasing number of scams targeting students
 - Targeting students while they adjust to a new environment
- Common scams
 - Attempts to solicit funds for the I-901 SEVIS Fee
 - Requests for money to help the student maintain status
- Report scams to the Homeland Security Investigations Tip Line
 - Call 866-DHS-2-ICE

Compliance and the Community

The Form I-515A, “Notice to Student or Exchange Visitor”

- Termination of student records
 - SEVP will terminate student records for failure to comply with I-515A submission requirements
 - Must submit paperwork to SEVP within 30 days
- Submission package:
 - Form I-515A
 - Form I-20 or DS-2019, “Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status,” with original signatures
 - Printed copy of the student’s Form I-94, “Arrival/Departure Record”
 - Copy of the admission stamp administered at the port of entry
 - Student’s I-901 SEVIS Fee receipt
 - Supplementary information

Compliance and the Community

School Hot Topics

- SEVIS Access Approval Project
 - Coming soon
- Out-of-cycle reviews and requests for evidence (RFE)
 - Submit response electronically
 - Respond to SEVP by the date indicated



Record Keeping Best Practices

Keep Student Records Up-to-Date

- Student SEVIS records are living documents
- DSOs are responsible for taking certain actions, such as:
 - Allowing the student to drop below a full course of study
 - Changing the student's education level
 - Taking disciplinary action
 - Extending or shortening the student's program
 - Terminating the student's SEVIS record
 - Transferring student's record to another SEVP-certified school



Record Keeping Best Practices

Ensure Accurate and Timely Reporting

- Many items have a legal time limit to make changes:
 - Report changes to a student's personal or academic status within 21 days of the change
 - Report student's program end date within 30 days
 - Report a student's initial reporting or reporting for each term within 30 days of the program or next session start date
- Automatic SEVIS functions occur after the legal time limits to register student records for each session, term or semester have expired



Record Keeping Best Practices

Do Not Share SEVIS Passwords

- Sharing your password violates the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Sensitive Systems Policy Directive
 - May result in loss of SEVIS access
- Keep logon information secure
 - Do not store your password to a shared computer
 - Create a new password if yours has been compromised



Enhancing Customer Support

News from the SRC

- Leave of absence process change
 - Submit a “Request for Correction to Student Status” up to 60 days in advance of a student’s return from a temporary absence
- SRC transition update
 - All SEVIS Help Desk functions merged into the SRC

Localized Support *Field Representative Unit*

- Updates from the field
 - Conducted more than 9,400 school visits
 - Attended more than 80 conferences and events since deployment
- Field representative deployment update
 - Fourth and final class to deploy in December 2015
- Field representative training
 - Must complete and pass a comprehensive eight-week training course

A Resource for Everyone

Study in the States

- New features in 2015
 - Updated School, Student, Blog and Tools pages
 - SEVP School Certification Life Cycle tool
 - Study in the States widget
 - Get Social with Study in the States
 - Enhanced “Was this Helpful” feedback



Engage with SEVP

Stay Connected

- Key news and content
 - [Studyinthestates.dhs.gov/Blog](https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/Blog)
 - Email SEVPCommunications@ice.dhs.gov if you would like to contribute
 - Publications
 - SEVP Spotlight
 - SEVP Conference Bulletin
- Connect on social media
 - Follow us on Twitter (@StudyinStates)
 - Like us on Facebook
 - Connect with us on LinkedIn
- Engage with us through conferences
 - Email SEVPOutreach@ice.dhs.gov with information about your upcoming event

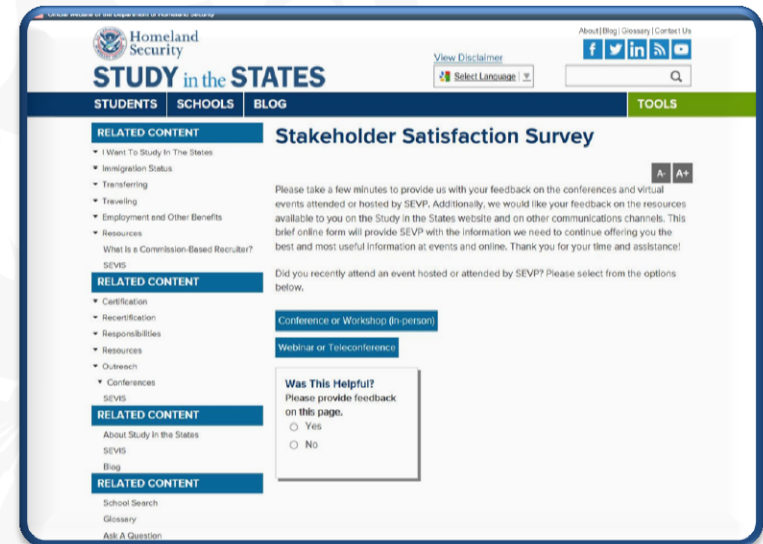
Coming Soon *Ask the Experts*

- Coming in early 2016
 - Participate in a live question and answer session with SEVP subject matter experts about specific issues impacting the academic community
- Join us for future webinars
 - SEVP InFocus and Ask the Experts webinars will occur on a rotating basis
 - Stay tuned to Study in the States and social media for upcoming webinar news

SEVP Values Your Feedback

StudyintheStates.dhs.gov/Survey

- Take our Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey today
- Your opportunity to provide feedback on this conference presentation
- Comments reviewed throughout the year



The screenshot shows the 'Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey' page on the 'Study in the States' website. The page has a blue header with the 'Homeland Security' logo and 'STUDY in the STATES' text. Below the header is a navigation bar with 'STUDENTS', 'SCHOOLS', and 'BLOG' links. The main content area is titled 'Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey' and includes a 'View Disclaimer' link and a 'Select Language' dropdown. The survey text asks for feedback on conferences and virtual events. There are two radio button options: 'Conference or Workshop (in person)' and 'Webinar or Teleconference'. Below these is a section titled 'Was This Helpful?' with 'Yes' and 'No' radio buttons. The page also features a sidebar with 'RELATED CONTENT' links such as 'I Want To Study In The States', 'Immigration Status', 'Transferring', 'Traveling', 'Employment and Other Benefits', 'Resources', 'What is a Commission-Based Recruiter?', 'SEVIS', 'Certification', 'Recertification', 'Responsibilities', 'Outreach', 'Conferences', 'About Study In the States', 'SEVIS', 'Blog', 'School Search', 'Glossary', and 'Ask A Question'.

SEVP Contact Information

- Contact the SRC by:
 - **Phone:**
 - 703-603-3400, or
 - 800-892-4829
 - **Email:**
 - For case-specific questions, email SEVP@ice.dhs.gov.
 - For technical issues, email SEVISHelpDesk@ice.dhs.gov.
 - **Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, except holidays**
- Additional contact information:
 - StudyintheStates.dhs.gov/Contact-Us